

## County mobility project gets transportation grant

By AARON ALDRIDGE

Staff Writer

**NEWPORT** — The Endowment for Health, the state's largest health foundation, awarded more than \$350,000 in applied research, public policy and planning grants, including \$12,930 for the Sullivan County Mobility Project.

The money will be used to plan and develop a regional coordinating council under the state's transportation brokerage model to launch the Charlestown transportation pilot program.

The program will be run by the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission and the grant will fund the third phase of an evaluation process to expand the transportation network in the area.

"We're looking at designing a project and getting funding to implement it countywide," the commission's senior planner Peter Dzewaltowski said.

Dzewaltowski hopes to have the pilot program in operation by October when a series of four transportation alternatives will be evaluated.

"The Charlestown model will be used to look at the alternatives," Dzewaltowski said. "We now have a very fragmented system that is hard to navigate. We've developed a public transit plan where services would be centralized."

Once the pilot program is evaluated, Dzewaltowski said a transportation plan will be implemented throughout the county to serve urban and rural

areas.

"In the rural areas there will not be any fixed routes," Dzewaltowski said. "We'll have other services for those users, such as van and car pools and volunteer drivers."

The endowment was established in 1999, and since that time has awarded more than 500 grants totaling \$23 million.

"It's more than just this project," endowment spokeswoman Karen Ager said. "We're funding projects in six different counties to help reduce geographic barriers."

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